

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN**17 JANUARY 2008****APPROVED 01/24/2007**

At 6:04 pm the Board's meeting was called to order by Gene Cordes. Present were Selectmen Gene Cordes and Peter Bolduc; Town Administrator Heidi Carlson; and Public Keith Stanton who videotaped the meeting.

Thom Roy was present to discuss with the Board purchase of the previously discussed Fire Department request to purchase a generator light set. Roy said that they had been to MB Tractor and found a unit similar to the new one discussed at the budget time (cost new \$12,000 to \$14,000) that was \$5,900; and the Department had a donation from Charles Kimball of his points check in the amount of \$2, 378.62, making the cost to the Town \$3,521.38 of the used unit.

Roy said he is bringing this formally forward to the Selectmen to consider as there was some additional funds remaining in the new equipment line of the 2007 budget due to equipment purchase made possible with grant funds instead of the budgeted funds.

Cordes said the he did not want to consider 2007 fund expenditure given that it was now January 17th. Bolduc said that Chief Heselton had also approached him on election day about this.

Roy said he understands the Board's position, can't oversell it, knows it is late in the year, and that sometimes good opportunities present themselves and you can't take advantage of them.

Roy said that 2008 budgeted funds were not available at this point because they are planned for other items. He added that the computer has been taken out of the budget for 2008 because it was purchased in 2007 with the added funds Roy discussed earlier.

Roy left the meeting at 6:10 pm.

Selectmen took some time to read the minutes of January 3rd and began reviewing the mail folder.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Bolduc moved to approve the minutes for 03 January 2008. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0. The non-public session minutes from that date had not been printed and will be obtained later.

2. Selectmen considered expending money from the Highway Equipment for the plow purchased in December 2007 due to the high snow removal costs also in December. Again, the Board did not want to consider a 2007 expense being changed at this point.

3. Selectmen reviewed the contract extension document from Comcast regarding the cable contract, which was delivered by Jay Somers on Tuesday. This would extend the existing cable contract for 30 days from January 21, 2008 to February 20, 2008. All other terms are the same as the existing contract and it also states that negotiations will continue during the extension period.

Bolduc moved to accept the contract extension from Comcast for a period to end February 20, 2008. Cordes seconded and the vote was approved 2-0. A copy of the extension was shared with Stanton and Peter Bearse, who came into the meeting at 6:28 pm.

There was some discussion about build-out costs on a separate document from Somers, to include areas where Fremont residents get their feed from Raymond and Sandown, such that those residents would get the Fremont feed to be able to get Fremont's channel 22.

Carlson advised that during the conversation with Somers, it appears that Comcast will not consider a build out to include Old Ridge Road except as a “pass through” which would cost \$10,000 (estimated construction) to subscribers.

4. Selectmen reviewed the price from Cape Disposal for trash collection in 2008 of \$135,401. There was some discussion about what this included. There are 33 new homes occupied since December of 2006, an increase of 2.2%; and a 2.5% annual cost of living increase as agreed in the original contract.

Bolduc moved to approve the Cape Disposal contract in the amount of \$135,401 for the year 2008 and to place that in the Selectmen’s budget as recommended. Cordes seconded and the vote was approved 2-0. A letter will go out to Carl Hussey notifying him of the contract extension.

NEW BUSINESS

1. It was explained that Carlson and Bolduc had reviewed the following manifests last week, as voted by the Board on January 3, 2008 in lieu of the Board having a meeting last week. Bolduc had been through all of them and signed off last Thursday and Friday. Cordes reviewed the payroll manifest \$17,164.20 dated January 11, 2008; accounts payable manifest \$13,403.82 dated January 11, 2008; and accounts payable manifest \$236,433.91 dated December 29, 2007. Motion was made by Bolduc to approve them. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

2. Selectmen are invited (as is the general public) to an important forum on Wednesday January 23, 2008 at 7:00 pm at Ellis School to hear the NE School Development Council findings at a meeting of the Long Range Facilities Planning Committee. This is posted, and the invite has been provided to all Town departments as well.

3. Selectmen reviewed the folder of incoming correspondence.

4. Selectmen received an applicant’s letter for seasonal part-time highway department driver position. This will be discussed in a non-public session as a personnel matter.

5. Carlson asked the Board to consider goals for 2008 so that some planning can be laid out for the year ahead. This will be reviewed next week with the full board present.

6. The public budget hearing is posted to begin with the Town budget on Wednesday February 6, 2008 at 7:30 pm; to be followed by the School budget on Thursday February 7, 2008 at 7:30 pm. The Budget Committee will meet both evenings beginning at 7:00 pm to review any petition warrant articles submitted.

Tom McGall came into the meeting at approximately 6:40 pm.

A meeting of the Board of Selectmen is also posted for 7:00 pm on Wednesday evening February 6, 2008 so that the Selectmen can review any petitions which may be submitted. The deadline for town warrant article petitions is Tuesday February 5, 2008 at 4:00 pm in the Selectmen’s Office.

At 6:45 pm Keith Stanton came up to the table with a proposal he wanted to present to the Board regarding alternatives for cable. Stanton said that he was here as a resident and Comcast subscriber and not a member of the Fremont Cable Committee.

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He said he wanted to discuss alternatives for financing the cable access channel for Fremont. He said it is all about money, the money Comcast wants to make in Fremont and that they do not want to spend for the right to do business in Fremont; the money that subscribers do not want added to their cable bill; and that the Selectmen said they did not really want to see it coming from the taxpayers. Stanton said he understood that 100%.

He said the Town is the only one using the channel, playing town meetings and the ticker information, currently.

He then presented alternative proposals to finance the cable channel as follows:

1. Stanton indicated that Verizon is selling cable TV in some areas of Fremont with no franchise agreement or contract with the Town of Fremont to do so. He cited NH RSA **53-C:2 Franchise Required.** –

I. No company shall construct, commence construction, or operate a cable television system in any municipality without first obtaining a written franchise from the franchising authority of each municipality in which such system is installed or to be installed.

II. Nothing in this chapter shall prevent municipalities from cooperating to jointly exercise franchising authority in accordance with RSA 53-A.

He suggested that perhaps Verizon needs to be taken to court by the Town as they are violating this law, and that as a result of some legal action, and that we could perhaps get restitution or fines to fund cable access.

2. With regard to the Town's bulky day, he said it has cost \$34,000 over the past three years, and that it is a service used by only a few residents. He suggested that anyone in Fremont can drive to the Raymond Transfer Station and throw away all of that stuff, much of which can be done at no cost; and they take more items than are accepted at Bulky Day. He had a copy of their schedule, said they are open six days a week, and it would change to a user-based service that not everyone needs to pay for. He indicated that the whole town pays so that a few people can throw their bulky things away with the current Bulky Day setup.

Bolduc said that from time to time everyone takes advantage of it for disposal of bulky items. Stanton thought it was used by only 10% of the households. His estimate is that this elimination would save \$6,633 per year.

3. The next item would be the annual town report being printed as the small version (half the size of the current book). He had Danville's Town Report as a sample and thought that we should eliminate the pictures and save \$1000 per year on the printing of the town report by making it smaller.

4. Stanton indicated that the new cable contract includes cable TV and internet service to all town buildings. This would save approximately \$2,600 per year currently included in the Town Budget. There was discussion about this being included and the contract should be reviewed to determine that it is.

5. The interest charged by Comcast to the ratepayers on the return line is 11.25% as per the current estimate, which results in \$ 17,700 in interest on that line amortized over the life of the contract. If we paid up front, with these alternative financing sources, there would be no interest for the cost of the construction.

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6. The cost of the Town's newsletter is \$6,000 per year and rising. Stanton suggested that having a cable access channel operational, and the Town Website, that the printed copy of the newsletter (and associated mailing costs) could be eliminated.

He totaled this to \$70,000 over the life of the 10 year cable contract

He referred to the 2002 Cable Study Committee report, in which one of the benefits of the access channel would be that you could minimize the cost of the community newsletter. It was stated that this has been discussed as an option, but that the Town does not want to exclude those who do not have cable or internet services. Alternatives were discussed.

Selectmen explained that the voters had initially put the cost of the monthly newsletter in the budget, and the Board felt that they would bring it back to the voters with numbers and information to come to a more cost effective use, and make a decision about removing it.

Carlson indicated that the Budget Committee had also discussed this last evening, given that the printing and mailing of Town Report and Newsletter are increasing.

Stanton said if you add up all of these aforementioned savings, it is \$18,150 annually or \$192,500 over the life of a 10 year cable contract.

Stanton said these are all executive decisions and require no approval from the voters or other town boards or committees.

Selectmen said on some issues, they would want to let the voters know our best thinking.

There was discussion about what the hard numbers might be on the use of Bulky Day. Stanton suggested it was a consideration to shift the burden to the actual consumer using the Bulky Day Services instead of all of the taxpayers.

Neal Janvrin came into the meeting at 7:00 pm.

There was additional discussion about the proposal and keeping track of cost items as they relate to taxpayers and subscribers.

Stanton thanked the Board for their consideration.

Tom McGall left the meeting at approximately 7:10 pm.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

7. The sign-up period for Town and School District Offices begins on Wednesday January 23, 2008 and runs through Friday February 1, 2008. Sign ups are to be done with the Town Clerk or School District Clerk.

8. Selectmen reviewed a request to use the Town Hall on Sunday March 16, 2008 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm for a baby shower with a fee due of \$35. Bolduc moved to approve this use. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0. Selectmen initialed the application form.

9. Carlson advised the Board that there were two Winnacunnet High School students working on a community service project regarding the Fremont Grassdrags and would like to propose a set of interview

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questions to one of the Selectmen. Bolduc suggested that Cordes answer the questions, and that will be arranged by telephone.

10. The Town is in receipt of a Current Use application from Conrad Magnusson for the remaining one acre of parcel 02-070 that was formerly a gravel pit. The Planning Board was unable to act on the information (in terms of closing out the pit) last night as they did not have a quorum. Selectmen will wait to consider the application pending further decision from the Planning Board.

11. Selectmen reviewed a letter from the Epping Fire Department Explorer Post regarding defibrillators in Epping and Fremont schools, and their fundraising drive to accomplish it. There was discussion about the article going in the newsletter, and being posted in places around town. The Newsletter guidelines will be reviewed to see if a truncated version of the letter would be permissible.

Lori Holmes came into the meeting at 7:10 pm.

Neal Janvrin and Lori Holmes came up to the table at 7:12 pm. Janvrin said that they were here to address issues from the voting on Primary Day.

Janvrin said the most frequent complaints were about how long people had to wait in line. He said they did away with ½ the line by eliminating the check-out process, but that some people waited as much as 45 minutes to one hour, outside, to get in to vote.

He said they need two check-in stations which there is not currently room for at the Safety Complex. He said that the Complex is inadequate for this type of voter turnout. He said there is also an issue with parking and a lack of help. Additional help is needed to keep the lines down and get the amount of voters through more efficiently. He said they need four (4) more people to split the lines and get people in and out.

He also said that people expressed interest in opening the polls at 7:00 am. He estimated between 50 and 70 people came between 7:00 and 8:00 am, hoping to vote on their way to work. Selectmen and Janvrin thought that 8:00 am opening was a Town vote and changing that time would also be done by the voters. Janvrin said there may be a petition in to increase the polling times. It was discussed and decided the Board would put that on. Lori Holmes will provide the verbiage to Carlson as soon as possible to be included on the warrant.

They also indicated there are again new rules for a Presidential election, in that one booth is required for every 90 registered voters (up from the standard at the end of 2007 of one per 125 registered voters) and we are currently short on voting booths, after just purchasing five more in the fall to meet the prior standard.

They had not added this additional cost to their 2008 budget proposal, and it will need to be added now. This is approximately \$800.

To address space problems, Janvrin again suggested trying to work out something with the school, which would likely require school being closed. Holmes said that many schools do staff development on these days, and that school employees and poll workers could park at the Complex and Fremont Pizzeria (thus crossing the street only once in the morning and afternoon) and providing the entire school lot for use by voters.

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Holmes asked for Carlson to forward an email to Annmarie Scribner at SAU 83 following this discussion this evening and make a request about using the school. Holmes had talked to her earlier in the evening, and Scribner said she would follow-up the request with the appropriate officials.

Cordes said that we may have been able to do something with fire trucks and space, but we will never overcome the parking issues at the Safety Complex, and the safety issues with that much congestion.

Janvrin then suggested having the Highway Department assist with setup and bring down of the equipment, and asked if Leon's work schedule could be changed on those election days. Carlson indicated that could likely be worked out with the Road Agent, but that overtime should not be considered for this purpose.

Immediately, Carlson needed to know for budgeting purposes the number of election workers needed; number of booths needed, and amount of help needed for setup and take down of equipment.

This includes: four (4) additional election workers budgeted, to be appointed on a recommendation from the Town Clerk or Moderator; two (2) Democrats and two (2) Republicans; one (1) additional person to help with setup, aside from Janvrin and Dick Rand; and a set of five (5) more ballot booths.

Site details are all OK at the school with the lined parking lot, and Janvrin said that one uniformed officer is required at the polling place and that one police officer could handle it at the school.

These items would be needed for the September 2008 Primary and November 2008 General Election; and that the March town elections were fine with the current setup and personnel.

Peter Bearse added that many years ago the respective party chairs would help with volunteer efforts to help in the setup, and indicated that Andy Kohlhofer is the Republican Town Committee Chair and Holmes thought that Bob Larson was the Democratic Town Committee Chair.

Selectmen said that the letter to school officials needed to stress that we are looking to forward this information and that we need to fix this by the time of the November election.

The Town Clerk will find the language for the warrant article for polling hours and get it to Carlson, and provide any additional information needed for the presentation to the Budget Committee before next Wednesday's meeting.

At 7:40 pm Janvrin and Holmes left the meeting and David Gleason and Matthew Thomas met with the Board to look at plans for a three bay addition to the Historic Museum on Beede Hill Road.

Thomas said he was concerned about the recommendations of Thom Roy which include a septic system and handicap access. He said he is also concerned about the cost of construction. Thomas said that the Historical Society opens the building the second Sunday of each month from May to October and by special appointment. He said he does envision a day when it will be open more and it would be nice to have a bathroom facility but he is concerned about cost and where it would be located on the property.

Cordes said it was better to discuss this stuff and discuss the issues before getting into the project, and avoid getting into it and not have done enough planning.

Gleason had some photographs of the building including corner moulding details. He said it does not make sense to spend a lot of money without knowing some detail of the building and what you want to

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do. He put up photographs on the easel, and a copy of the survey of the site blown up to get to scale so the building could be seen as laid out.

He outlined where the handicap access would be, and it would allow the old building to remain as is and not be disturbed by the construction. The handicap entrance would be at the new section and would allow entry to both portions of the building.

Peter Bearse left the meeting at 7:45 pm.

Gleason said the low area of water retention at the corner of Beede and Main needs to be dealt with to put a well and septic on site. He said the original building is fine and they can work on the architecture and the aesthetics for an addition to fit with it.

The access/drive and parking areas can be gravel or paved, whatever is decided. He said that one downside is it does block the view of the neighbor no matter if it is left in a line or a T or L shape.

The handicap ramp inside the building does take up a lot of space to meet all of the proper grades. He said the exterior ramp is only eight (8) feet and some of the exterior work could be handled with grading.

He said you can provide a space for the bathroom area but not build it now, do it in the future. He said you don't want to put in a septic system without dealing with the drainage issues at the corner of Beede and Main (which needs to be done by the State of NH).

A question was asked about how are we restricted in the use of the space without having a bathroom facility. Gleason said we are not restricted because it is not a 24 hours a day use of the building.

It was recapped that the cornerstones in Gleason's thinking include that the old structure is good and should be worked around; the new entrance needs to be made accessible and that is included in this plan; positioning options have been considered, and there is nothing that is ideally perfect for the site and that what is proposed seems to work best on the site.

Gleason said he had looked a lot at Thomas's history book and that the historic way to develop a building like this is to go out from the back, which happens more than adding to either side.

There was discussion about how much daylight you get and does it present any security issues. Also, the oil storage tank would have to be moved, and Gleason suggested on the same side of the building, closer to Route 107. Cordes suggested foliage landscaping around it.

Gleason said the cost of construction could easily be obtained to get a better cost estimate for planning purposes, once a final design is determined.

He discussed also if you know you want to do bathroom, well and septic, you will need to get into engineering design.

Selectmen and Thomas felt that this concept was the way to move ahead in terms of the historical research and what is available at the site as well.

There was discussion about being able to cut down the garage door size down to 8 feet (shown currently as 10). The equipment planned for the building includes the hearse, handtub and an old Spaulding and Frost logging sled. None of these pieces are wider than five feet, according to Thomas.

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Thomas thought this seemed practical and sensible because he was concerned about cost. Not finishing the bathroom is also a cost-saving that could perhaps be seen now. Thomas said that the reason this issue is being proposed is because the Fire Department wants to get the 1848 fire pumper out of the fire station and that Selectmen and others, would like to see the 1861 hearse in a safer and more secure facility and it is also potentially being damaged by squirrels. When Spaulding and Frost closed, some of those artifacts were able to be maintained in Fremont, including some barrel making equipment and a large logging sled which is currently stored in a barn by a generous Fremont resident. Thomas said he wanted to see these artifacts put in a safe place where there is room to store them and preserve them well.

Selectmen asked for Gleason and Thomas to give the Board a few weeks to talk to Don Gates, who is not here; and then pick a time to get together in a couple of weeks. This was agreeable to all.

Gleason and Thomas left the meeting at approximately 8:05 pm.

Cordes indicated that he had gone to the Energy Alliance in Durham last evening with Bob Larson; and that there was a Fremont Energy Committee meeting on Tuesday evening at the Town Hall.

At 8:14 pm Bolduc moved to recess the meeting to 8:25 pm. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved.

At 8:25 pm the meeting came back to order.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

12. Selectmen reviewed the February 2008 Newsletter. It was approved for publication, needing only the dates for election sign up information for Town and School District elections and voting from the Town Clerk

13. Selectmen reviewed the sealed non-public session minutes of January 3, 2008. Bolduc moved to approve each of the sessions of these minutes as printed. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

14. Selectmen then reviewed the January 18, 2008 vendor manifest in the amount of \$409,200.77, \$400,000 of which is to the Fremont School District; and \$7,998 to the Town's Worker's Compensation carrier, Primex. Bolduc moved to approve the manifest in the amount of \$409,200.77. Cordes seconded and the vote was approved 2-0.

At 8:41 pm Cordes moved to enter non-public session under NH RSA 91-A 3 II (c) for discussion of a matter which would likely affect the reputation of a person. Bolduc seconded and the vote was approved 2-0. Stanton left the meeting at this time.

Stanton returned to the meeting at 8:50 pm at which time Bolduc moved to return to public session. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

15. Selectmen continued reviewing the mail folder.

They discussed emails which had been received from Jeane Samms at NH DRA regarding town officer salaries in response to the Budget Committee questions.

Cordes said that it seems like DRA is saying that if the salaries are changing there should be a stand alone warrant article, and to make sure it is clear what the salary is for the position. There was also a statement

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by Samms that said they could all be done as one to formalize it, and get them all on record for what they currently are.

Selectmen indicated that with regard to elected officials, the voters put them in office, and they are accountable only to the voters. Selectmen indicated they don't have any say after they are voted in, and the compensation should also be decided by voters.

Selectmen decided they would like to do it as a separate warrant article as recommended. This will split out any wages/salaries of elected town officials from their current budget for this year, and include them as a warrant article.

They further stated that any benefit costs other than social security that are included, should be included in the article. Cordes suggested that the warrant article should list all positions individually with the position compensation.

As the Selectmen reviewed the mail folder, they had another item that was a personnel matter, regarding a job posting.

At 9:14 pm Cordes moved to enter non-public session pursuant to NH RSA 91-A II 3 (c) to discuss a potential hiring matter. Bolduc seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0. Stanton left the meeting.

At 9:24 pm Stanton returned to the meeting. At this time Bolduc moved to return to public session. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

Cordes reported that no decisions were made and moved to seal the minutes until next week when they could be reviewed again to determine if they needed to be sealed for a further period of time. Bolduc seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

NEXT WEEK

The Budget Committee meets at 7:00 pm on Wednesday January 23, 2008 to begin reviewing the School District budget s for recommendation.

There is a School Public Forum on Wednesday at 7:00 pm at Ellis School for a presentation by the Long Range Facilities Planning Committee.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be held on Thursday January 24, 2008 at 6:00 pm.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Bolduc and seconded by Cordes to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 pm. The vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator